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**CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS****APPLICANT:** City of Cambridge**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** City of Cambridge

Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the notebook should be tabbed and organized as follows:

- ☐ **TAB #1** Sustainable Community Applicant Information
- ☐ **TAB #2** Sustainable Community Baseline Information and Map: In addition to the baseline narrative, include a hard copy of the proposed Sustainable Communities map in Tab 2.
- ☐ **TAB #3** Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects and Workgroup Roster: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III
- ☐ **TAB #4** Sustainable Community Plan
- ☐ **TAB #5** Progress Measures
- ☐ **TAB #6** Local Support Resolution and Letters of Support: In addition to the local support resolution, please include any letters of support that demonstrate partner commitments to the implementation and/or oversight of the Sustainable Community Plan.
- ☐ **TAB #7** Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification
- ☐ **TAB #8** CD-ROM: The CD-ROM should include the following contents:
  - ☐ Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Communities area
  - ☐ GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data, eg, spreadsheet of detailed listing of parcels that form the project boundary. If you have additional comments or questions about the GIS mapping requirements, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org
  - ☐ Pictures (jpeg format) of your Sustainable Community as it relates to your application

All documents on this checklist are mandatory.  
Failure to provide the requested document will automatically deny your application.

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**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION**

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**Name of Sustainable Community:** City of Cambridge

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**Legal Name of Applicant:** City of Cambridge

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**Federal Identification Number:** 52-6000780

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**Street Address:** 410 Academy Street

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**City:** Cambridge **County:** Dorchester **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21613

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**Phone No:** (410) 221-6074 **Fax:** (410) 228-4554 **Web Address:** www.choosecambridge.com

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**Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:**

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**Name:** Anne Roane **Title:** City Planner

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**Address:** P.O. Box 255 **City:** Cambridge **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21613

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**Phone No:** 410-228-1955 **Fax:** **E-Mail:** aroane@choosecambridge.com

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**Person to be contacted for Award notification:**

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**Name:** Anne Roane **Title:** City Planner

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**Address:** P.O. Box 255 **City:** Cambridge **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21613

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**Phone No:** 410-228-1955 **Fax:** **E-mail:** aroane@choosecambridge.com

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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that trends and conditions in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, nature, natural resources, the local business and residential districts show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment. Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV)

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE  
AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH  
DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization  
activities which will be covered in Section IV).

### **A. Proposed Sustainable Area(s):**

**County:** Dorchester

**Name of Sustainable Community:** City of Cambridge

**Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels(i.e. Parcel ID Numbers)that form the project boundary should be included. If possible, maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD,**

**[wolters@MdHousing.org](mailto:wolters@MdHousing.org)**

The proposed boundaries of the Sustainable Communities (Attachment A) area were developed through the Workgroup and approved by the City Council. They include most areas identified as recipients of various types of funding through different types of designations and areas identified as target areas for economic development. Included in the boundaries are the two Historic Districts, the Downtown Waterfront District, the Arts and Entertainment District, and Heritage Area Target Investment Zones and the Enterprise Zones. All are located within the City's Priority Funded Area (PFA), (see Attachment B). Included on disk submitted with hard copy will be maps and detailed Parcel ID Numbers, Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

A correction was made to the original Sustainable Communities Boundary Map to include three properties near intersection of US. Rte. 50 (Ocean Gateway) and Rose Hill Drive. These properties include the Sailwinds Visitor's Center and MD SHA property. The verbal description of the boundary has been amended to reflect this change as well as to include one partial property that was left off the original map (a parking lot owned by the American Legion which also serves as an access way to the Bill Burton Memorial Fishing Pier next to the waterfront. An additional Exhibit 1 is included which reflects this boundary change. Individual maps for Cambridge's Historic Districts are also shown as Exhibit 2 and 3.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 2,420 acres

Existing Federal, State, or Local designations(check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Legacy Area   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated Neighborhood                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main Street             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maple Street                                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Historic District | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Register Historic District           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A&E District            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRAC                               | <input type="checkbox"/> State Designated TOD                                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other(s)                |   |

HUB Zone, Smart Sites (2), Heritage Area Target Investment Zone,  
Downtown/waterfront Development District

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **Prior revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:**

**(a) List and describe any significant State local smart growth or revitalization related program investments (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community?**

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cambridge became a Community Legacy designated area in 2003, since then, the community has benefited from this funding program through streetscape improvements, new sidewalks and facade improvements in the downtown area.

Major infrastructure improvements have been funded by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), and Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

DNR's Community Parks and Playground program has been instrumental in improving several of the City's neighborhood playgrounds. Recently the City received a grant from Maryland Department of Transportation's Bikeways Program for the Cambridge Heritage Trail Retrofit, to provide designated bike lanes along selected Cambridge streets.

See spreadsheet (Attachment C) for a complete list and more information

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer "cornfields"?**

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

As with many cities, the cost of new construction often includes charges for zoning and building permits, impact fees, County excise taxes and utility hook-up fees. When added up, the cost of all fees associated with a building permit for a single family dwelling unit ranges is estimated at \$10,000-\$14,000. The City's impact fee of \$5,640 is based on the following: Water - \$860.00, Sewer - \$1,725.00, Public Safety - \$1,850.00, Streets and Roads - \$980.00, Parks and Recreation - \$225.00.

While these fees are generally applied uniformly to new construction whether in the SC area or in the outlying areas, the City does not charge impact fees if a property was previously occupied by a dwelling unit and if previous utility connections were present. This is an advantage for new construction in the SC Boundary area. The City Commission, on a case by case basis, may also waive fines and liens placed on properties for property code violations if commitments to new construction are made within a specific time period. The City has no control of the County's excise tax where dwelling units are charged an additional \$3,671 per unit; however, if an applicant can demonstrate that the building or property has been occupied within a three year period, the Excise Tax may be waived. (Source: Beth Todd, Permits Administrator). It should be noted that the Dorchester County Council recently considered waiving the County Excise Tax fee but by a 3-2 vote, Council members elected to retain it. (Source: recent article in Dorchester Star Newspaper).

The City also has expedited the review of zoning permits in the NC zoning districts which are located within the SC Boundary area by allowing staff to grant minor variances to setback requirements upon public notice. The NC 1 through 4 zoning districts, also referred to as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, consist of four (4) residential and mixed use zones. They serve to recognize the City's older established core area neighborhoods. Many of these areas have unique architecture and character with small lot development patterns. The ability of staff to grant minor variances has resulted in a streamlined review process due to zoning changes adopted by City Council in 2011. This has allowed new single family homes with a larger foot print to rebuild on existing lots with very narrow widths.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses**

**(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment. For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural palces? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportaion assests? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting?**

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Cambridge's inherent strengths or assets in the built environment include:

- walkable residential neighborhoods and a downtown adjacent to the waterfront;
- a mixed use waterfront with new development opportunities;
- a new industrial park near the county airport;
- a growing tourism industry anchored by waterfront parks, the Harriet Tubman National Park plans and the nearby Blackwater Wildlife Refuge;
- a new \$35M Vocational Tech School;
- two recognized historic district listing approximately 1,500 properties.

Cambridge's weaknesses include:

- the impact of unfinished subdivisions including unfinished streets;
- deteriorated housing conditions in parts of town (34% of its units are classified as "vacant other" compared to the national average of 24%). Source: 2010 US Census. It is estimated there are over 100 units identified as severely substandard. Source: Substandard Housing Survey, Center for Family & Community Life, Salisbury Univ. Study, Oct. 2007;
- lack of rehabilitation and poor condition of renter and owner occupied dwellings;
- a low proportion of owner occupied housing units (44%), compared to the national average of 65-66%;
- the need to renovate and occupy commercial buildings in downtown, strip malls and big box stores along US Rte. 50.

Underutilized Historic and Cultural Buildings/Places:

- The most important initiative for the City is the reuse and redevelopment of the Sailwind's SHA Port property on the waterfront.
- The City needs to retain Chesapeake College in the downtown as an economic development priority. Existing facilities are inadequate in the long term.
- The former Maces Lane High School has sat vacant for several years and creative efforts are needed to rehabilitate this property for adaptive re-use/neighborhood recreation.
- Reuse of an abandoned railroad corridor for a recreational trail which could spur re-investment in the core area including the rehabilitation of two former canning factories along Dorchester Avenue.
- The Dorchester Center for the Arts needs funding support to expand its facilities in downtown Cambridge.
- Rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of the abandoned 1905 era school building (Golden Shore Academy) designed the Benjamin Brown (turn of the century architect from Cambridge).
- Fire damaged historic buildings on the 400 and 500 block of Race Street.

Cambridge has three waterfront parks and several neighborhood parks. A Master Recreational Plan is needed to identify priorities for capital improvements and long range projects including the need for POS funding. The City needs additional grant assistance to complete gateway improvements on Maryland Ave., Cedar and Race streets. High Street, one of the city's most historic streets is in need of major rehabilitation. The installation of a traffic circle near the intersection of Muse, Market, Academy and the terminus of Maryland Avenue has been identified as a priority. The County's Airport needs additional funding to expand its runway. The City has many unimproved, radial streets that are in need repaving, curb, gutter, drainage improvements, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. The City recently received funding through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Green Streets and Infrastructure program to design and implement gateway treatments at sites identified through plans from the R/UDAT, the City of Cambridge Comprehensive Plan and the Economic Strategic Plan (see Attachment D, NFWF ) Work Program and Community Outreach Debrief). This project is focusing first on the intersection of Route 50 and Maryland Avenue, with the expectation that there will be design elements that can be replicated at other identified gateways. As part of this project, the City has partnered with Sailwind, Inc., a local non-profit that oversees development of the Visitor Center and surrounding waterfront, in an application for funding to assist in land acquisition for this project.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up(residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment?**

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Cambridge's land use and zoning patterns may be reflective of other waterfront towns on the Eastern Shore. The seafood, shipping and canning industries fueled growth from its inception through the mid-1950s. The decline of these economic activities, the relocation and expansion of the Rte. 50 highway corridor, combined with suburban growth trends over the past three decades have set the stage for many of its problems and opportunities.

As with many towns with an industrial heritage, deteriorated, factory housing conditions and sizeable brownfields affect the City's core area and health of the downtown. These issues warrant special attention, especially along the waterfront and near Washington Street where the Phillips Canning factories stood next to now abandoned or underutilized railway corridors.

Cambridge witnessed a period of extreme development interest and activity during the height of the real estate bubble, perhaps more so than any other community on the Eastern Shore. Between 2003 and 2008, 12-14 new subdivision applications were filed for review containing over 3000 lots. By some estimates Cambridge has a supply of platted lots to last the next 40 years at current growth rates. This growth has created subdivisions in various stages of completion. Several contain a large number of platted lots without having completed the necessary final infrastructure (streets, water and sewer). Some plats are considered still active while some newly recorded subdivision plats with Homeowner Associations (HOA's) struggle with their ability to collect dues to perform basic maintenance functions. These new subdivisions are, for the most part, located outside of the proposed Sustainable Community Boundary and resources available to the City are not proposed to assist these private developments.

Cambridge adopted a new Comprehensive Plan in 2011 that strives to redirect growth to its core area and preserve the countryside with a greenbelt. The broadly defined goals of the land use plan are:

- Create a vibrant and beautiful central place while preserving a green belt around the city.
- Take maximum advantage of the waterfront.
- Intensify and revitalize the U.S. Route 50 corridor.
- Promote the emergence of office and related non-residential uses between Maryland Avenue and the waterfront.
- Improve housing conditions in downtown/waterfront.

The current zoning ordinance, adopted in 2003 is undergoing a rewrite to a Form-Based Code. This new code will reinforce and implement the new Comprehensive Plan policies and promote more flexible and compatible uses in the core area. The City has also been the beneficiary of many studies and collaborative planning efforts. The Cambridge Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team or RJUDAT Study, completed in 2006 provided a foundation for many of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life. For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities with in or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area?**

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Strengths and Weakness in basic features of community quality of life: While crime statistics and comparisons were not analyzed as part of this application, Cambridge's crime statistics are likely to mirror the State's with downward trends across many categories. As noted in the 2006 R/UDAT study: "Despite decreasing crime levels, perception is reality. Therefore, more has to be done so that residents and visitors feel and are safer especially in key tourism locations". The statement still holds true today although great strides have been made in making the downtown and tourism sites safe. Recently, however, arson and its impact on the City is a serious issue identified by the State Fire Marshall's office due to a slate of fires in the core area over the past two years.

Regarding education, the R/UDAT identified the quality of the Dorchester County Public Schools as a "hot button topic" in the broader community and acknowledged the problems with an underperforming school system, a problem not limited to Cambridge and the County. The lack of alternatives to the public school system recently came up in 2013 as efforts to explore a private charter school were brought to the City and County for consideration. The R/UDAT study also noted the disparity in Cambridge's population over 25 with a high school diploma (71.2%) compared to the national average of 80%. The study reported that only 10.4 % of the population has a college degree or higher compared to the national average of 24.4% in 2000. Recent data from the 2010 suggest educational levels have been improving as noted in the following table.

Maryland  
 High School Graduate or more Bachelor's Degree or More  
 1990 78.4%26.5  
 200083.8%31.4  
 200988.2%35.7

Source: Table 233. Educational Attainment by State 1990 to 2009  
 U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2012

Cambridge  
 2011 78.7%15.3%

Source: DPO2: Selected Social (2007-2011) American Community Survey (ACS). Note: margin of error is not included in percentage calculations.

In addition to the new Dorchester Career & Technology Center for high school students, Cambridge is home to two institutions of higher learning: Chesapeake Community College and the Sojourner Douglass College. Both need support from the local community and state to meet the educational needs of its citizens. As noted by recent conversations with police officers, the lack of recreational activities for teenagers is a major need that warrants attention in order to reduce crimes committed by young people. Due to its compact nature, artistic, cultural, community resources, events and facilities are within or are accessible to residents in the SC area. The larger problem is the lack of facilities and programs to serve segments of the population.

Cambridge holds several state designations that provide revitalization resources to the City, including the following:

Main Street  
 Maple Street  
 Arts and Entertainment District  
 Two Smart Sites  
 Enterprise Zones  
 HUB Zone  
 Cambridge Ward I and III Historic District (West End)  
 Pine Street Neighborhood Historic District (old Ward II).

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses**

**(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "Natural environment" in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the current condition of key natural resources - lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise?**

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Since the core community of Cambridge is largely built out, the challenge for the City will be to:

- Preserve, protect existing open space, resource conservation areas and greenway corridors;
- Find ways to increase tree coverage along City streets and remnant tree stands in open space areas;
- Mitigate impervious surface stormwater run-off as re-development occurs unless additional funding mechanisms can be found to take pro-active action.
- Evaluate and implement methods to protect against shoreline erosion and to mitigate the impacts of coastal sea level changes on public and private property.

The City of Cambridge recently adopted a new Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps in 2011. However, developed areas of the City fronting the coastline of the Choptank River may be impacted from coastal sea level with additional loss of land area due to erosion and flood damage from high water events and storm surges. The City may also be faced with additional capital costs to repair or replace shoreline “armoring” structures (retaining walls, natural and artificial stone breakers). Properties along the coastline will likely be faced with the need to elevate structures. The City is not impacted from riverine flood conditions.

On the periphery of the core area, steps have been taken to preserve large wooded tracts and improve watershed management through conservation easements, zoning, Critical Area requirements, forest protection ordinances and agricultural programs. Air pollution is not an issue for Dorchester County and Cambridge. Further development in flood prone sensitive area should be curtailed with the adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon foot print" or impact on the environment. Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative?**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

There is one drop off recycling center within the municipal boundary. The Mayor has requested that the Department of Public Works investigate the feasibility of providing curb side recycling.

Delmarva Community Services, a non profit that provides a variety of services to the areas elderly and disabled, including administering the Meals on Wheels program, works closely with the local produce markets to use the freshest, locally grown ingredients.

The City's Farmers Market, which operates from late spring through the fall, is continuing to thrive and recently relocated from one of the City's parking lots in the downtown to the parking area at Long Wharf Park. This has been so successful that the Market is now planning on expanding from being open on Thursday afternoons to also Saturday mornings.

The City received an Energy Efficient Block grant in 2011, which funded the installation of solar panels for the new Public Safety Building and new energy saving LED bulbs for all of the City's traffic lights. Recently the Dorchester County Board of Education installed a solar panel field adjacent to one of the County's elementary and middle school which will provide power to both and is expected to produce surplus power.

Cambridge has been the recipient of several grants recently that promote best practices regarding developing green infrastructure. Current projects include: retrofitting the City's largest municipal parking lots with new bio-retention areas, designing and implementing new gateway treatments, which will encourage pedestrian access and bicycling. Additional improvements include: streetscape improvements, including new sidewalks, lighting and landscaping for Maryland Avenue and Cedar Street, two of the major gateway thoroughfares into downtown

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area. Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows.**



(Answer space 4000 characters)

In June of 2010, the City of Cambridge adopted a new Stormwater Management Ordinance which incorporated the updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly. With this new ordinance in place, there will be a good opportunity to improve the quality of stormwater runoff by implementing new stormwater controls and retrofitting existing storm drain systems as development and redevelopment occur in the SC Area.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **D. Economic Conditions & Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses**

**(1) Describe the jurisdiction's current economic strengths and weaknesses. For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's economic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation.**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Efforts are underway to increase worker skills and employment as provided by Dorchester High School System's vocational training facility. The City and County are also seeking to construct a jobs incubator building at the County/City tech park near the airport. The City is served with broad band access from multiple vendors including Bay County Communications, Comcast, and Verizon in addition to several satellite dish services. The coverage and affordability may need more study to determine its availability to the entire community.

Regarding trends in employment conditions between 2000 and 2010, the total job picture has remained nearly unchanged while population growth showed a healthy increase for the City. Employment patterns are illustrated by Exhibit 4 and 5. Over the course of the decade, the City's population expanded by 11.5 % from 10,911 to 12,326 (US Census). In the same time frame, "Total Jobs" shows very little growth with 16,143 total jobs in 2001 and 16,172 jobs reported in 2011.

The largest increases in select job categories occurred in the Mining, Finance, Real Estate, Professional Service, Accommodations and Food Services industries (See Exhibit 6). Construction, Manufacturing, and Retail Trade show a net loss in jobs over the decade. Manufacturing lost 1000+ jobs between 2001 and 2011 while Retail lost 200+ jobs over this time period. Government employment at the federal, state and local level witnessed modest growth.

Additional points worth mentioning are derived from the City's Strategic Economic Development plan (adopted by the City Commission in 2010) and summarized in Exhibit 7. These findings relate directly to Cambridge's economic strengths and weaknesses, or barriers to the City's economic competitiveness.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values. Describe how and whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs-both homeownership and rental - are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI, 50% AMI. JWhat efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above?**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Within the City of Cambridge, the 2010 Census identifies 6,228 housing units that comprise 38% of the County's total housing units. The City added 998 housing units over the decade for a 16 % increase, averaging almost 100 new units per year. Roughly for every 2 units of owner occupied housing built there 3 units of renter occupied housing constructed. Of occupied housing units, 44.4% are owner occupied with 55.6% considered renter occupied. The National average for owner occupied units is 65.1% according to 2010 Census data. Within the City of Cambridge, of those units listed as vacant, approximately 34% were considered as "Vacant Other" compared nationally to 24.4% "vacant other units nationally. Exhibit 8 illustrates changes in housing tenure between 1990 and 2010 for the City of Cambridge.

Building permits were analyzed to examine the pace of construction and where housing units were being constructed. As indicated in Exhibit 9 and 10, the pace of residential new construction and alterations has largely been steady between 2008 and 2013 although a drop in all permits is evident in FY 2012-13. New construction has largely been concentrated in five major residential development projects located generally on the outskirts of the core area. The pace of new construction in these developments is slowing as they approach build-out. From May 5th, 2009 through May 23rd, 2012, approximately 90% of all permits for new residential development were concentrated in five projects all being located on the periphery of the core area with one exception. These developments are listed in Exhibit 11. During the same time frame, fourteen (14) new single family homes were constructed in the core area NC (Neighborhood Compatibility) zoning districts during this time frame.

Housing affordability can be viewed based on the percentage of homeowners and renters that pay 35% or more of their income for mortgage or rent. As shown in Exhibit 12 within the City, 36.1% of owners and 44.6% of renters pay 35% or more of their income for housing costs. These numbers are consistent with the State's Sustainability Index data shown in Exhibit 13.

Foreclosure is both a problem and to some degree an opportunity. Many homeowners and investors, find themselves upside down on mortgages. With almost a 1/3 to 2/3 decline in property values from the peak of the bubble in 2007, many properties have been lost to foreclosure and tax sale. Homes that were purchased for \$300,000 six years ago are now being purchased for \$60-100,000. On a positive side, low prices have attracted out of town buyers seeking 2nd homes. Large homes in the Historic District have recently been purchased for as low as \$25,000. Affordability in both rental housing appears not an issue for the community according to interviews with local landlords, due in part to the construction of new rental housing in the City.

The City has identified illegal conversions of single family housing to multi-family housing and lack of maintenance as an obstacle to neighborhood stability. The City discourages the continuation of multi-family apartments as a non-conforming uses in the core area NC residential zoning districts.

It is estimated that there are number of group homes/independent living facilities present in the Cambridge area and one underlying thought is that the City has more than their fair share of small group homes serving the disabled populations. US Census identifies 14 Group Home Quarters in the City which housed 457 individuals in the 2010 Census out of 506 persons countywide. In 2000, Census data reported 571 persons in Group Home Quarters in the City of Cambridge. (Source: Dorchester County General Demographic Characteristics by Block, U.S. Census Bureau Census 2010 SF1) and Maryland 2000 Census Report on Population and Housing, Maryland Department of Planning. See Exhibit 14 for definition of Group Quarters.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(3) Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors).**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Age: In 2000, the median age of the Cambridge population was 38.8 years while 2010 Census data show the City growing younger with a median age of 37.6. The City's under 5 year age group gained population while the school aged population (5-20) and (21-44) populations decreased. Gains were registered in the 45-64 year old categories but Cambridge's elderly (65 and older) lost population.

City of Cambridge

Change in Age Categories

Between 2000 and 2010

Under 5 Years 365

5 to 20 Years -1187

21-34 Years -1041

35 to 44 Years -103

45 to 54 Years 173

55 to 59 Years 301

60 to 64 Years 246

65 to 74 Years -15

75 to 84 Years -117

85 years Years -13

Racial Diversity: Cambridge is arguably the most racially diverse city on the Eastern Shore compared to nearby cities of similar size as shown in Exhibit 15. Census data from 2010 reveals that 45.9% of the City's population is white; 47.9% black or African American; 4.9%-Hispanic and 1.3%-Asian. Compared to 2009 data, Cambridge's white population decreased in numbers while the black and other minority populations increased.

In 2000, the City contained 4,629 households. In 2010 there were 5,144 households, an addition of 515 households for an 11.1 % increase. Family households were estimated at 59.1%, compared to 58.3% from the previous decade. Female heads of households were estimated at 1,234 in 2010 (24% of total HH) compared to 1,069 in 2000 (23.1%). It was estimated that 61.2% of Female Heads of Households had children under the age of 18 in 2010 compared to a 63.1% in 2000.

The 2000 Census recorded that 17 percent of all families and 20 percent of all people in Cambridge had household incomes that placed them below the designated poverty level. By comparison, six percent of families in Maryland had incomes below the poverty level. Exhibit 16 shows poverty rates for Cambridge in comparison to other cities on the Eastern Shore. On a countywide basis, an additional table and chart (Exhibit 17 and 18) shows the poverty rate for Dorchester County in comparison to other counties on the lower Eastern Shore. Poverty rates for the four lower Eastern Shore counties are on the rise.

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### **III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS**

#### **A. Organizational Structure:**

**Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan?**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Cambridge, Maryland  
Sustainable Community Designation Workgroup

- 1.Planning and Zoning Staff-Anne Roane
- 2.Planning and Zoning Commission-Joy Loeffler
- 3.Economic Development Staff-Natalie Chabot
- 4.Economic Development Staff-Mary Calloway
- 5.Chamber of Commerce-Allen Nelson
- 6.Downtown Business-Carol Levy Ruark
- 7.Main Street Executive Director-Mari Stanley
- 8.Dorchester County Director of Tourism-Amanda Fenstamaker
- 9.Sailwinds, Inc.-Jerry Burroughs-
- 10.Historic Preservation Commission-Katie Clendaniel
- 11.Delmarva Community Services- Katie Clendaniel
- 12.Dorchester County Economic Development-Keasha Haythe
- 13.Pine Street Community-Dion Banks
- 14.West End Citizens Association(WECA)-Barbara Harp
15. Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC)-Sarah Abel

Anne Roane, the City Planner and Natalie Chabot, the Director of Economic Development, together have over 25 years of experience in managing state and federal grants, such as Community Legacy, CDBG, DBED, Program Open Space, DNR, MDE grants and others.

Policy in the City is directed by the Mayor and Council. Ms. Roane and Ms. Chabot are responsible for implementing and presenting policies to the Mayor and City Council.

Ms. Roane is responsible for city ordinances, the City Comprehensive Plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. Ms. Chabot is responsible for implementing the City Economic Strategic Plan, assisting new business and retention of existing businesses. Both are responsible for identifying and seeking funding for various projects.

The workgroup was led by Ms. Roane.

### **III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS**

#### **B. Organizational Experience:**

**Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

In the spring of 2006, the Cambridge Main Street program asked the R/UDAT program to perform an assessment of how the Cambridge Main Street program could advance its mission for commercial revitalization and economic enhancement of the city's distinctive and historic core. R/UDAT stands for Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team and is comprised of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals usually from the fields of urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, planning and economic development. The R/UDAT program has used this grassroots approach across the nation to help create communities that are healthy, safe and livable, as well as more sustainable. The plan produced included an aggressive 'Implementation Schedule Projection' with 38 action items and associated timelines. In just seven years, 66% of the items have been completed or are in process (see Attachment E). Many of the items involved grant funding.

March 28, 2011, the Mayor and Council adopted the 'City of Cambridge Comprehensive Plan.' The framework for the plan began with the R/UDAT report. This 'road map' for future growth, not just where but how, was born from extensive public input and environmental analysis.

#### Initiatives

Since the report many initiatives have come to fruition including creating the city's new Department of Economic Development, the creation of a free wireless hot spot in 3 blocks of downtown by BCC IT, and the implementation of a downtown Farmer's Market.

The City of Cambridge's leadership and the above referenced implementation partners, (i.e. Main Street, ESLC, WECA) have tremendous experience in revitalization and infrastructure improvements, administering in excess of \$35 million dollars, including federal, state and private grants and public and private funds for various capital improvement projects, capacity building, public outreach and long and short term planning. The Sustainable Communities Workgroup adds subject matter expertise in an array of public/private endeavors, plus historic preservation and promotion of the arts .

### **III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS**

#### **C. Public Input:**

**How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to Action plan described below in section IV?**

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Many of the recommendations contained in this submission were based on six, if not more, major planning initiatives covering a time period from 2006 to 2012 involving extensive public involvement. They include the R/UDAT Study, Waterfront 20/20 Charette process, the Comprehensive Plan, the City's Economic Strategic Plan Initiative, the Sailwinds redevelopment project, and most recently the overhaul of the zoning ordinance. Many, if not all of the goals and policy initiatives of these planning efforts are consistent with sustainability principles and form the basis for the Action Plan.

Stakeholders from many of the aforementioned planning efforts were involved in the preparation of this action plan component. In addition, the Working Subcommittee on this document met approximately six times over the course of 2012 prior to submission. Public meetings were also conducted with the City Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission as part of the citizen engagement process.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy - a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects in the SC Plan should improve the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties - and create new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. These projects should also reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a sustainable and livable community.

##### **A.Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental Impacts.**

**(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The underlying qualities of the land help determine which uses are viable. To the extent possible, the natural capability and characteristics of the land should guide land use development. Natural areas should provide form to urban development; defining the edges of intensely developed areas and providing wide, open spaces. Together natural areas are resources and they add to scenic beauty. Natural areas can connect various parts of a City and in so doing can become useful elements in city planning; they become environmental corridors—areas for stormwater management, flood control, wildlife habitat, recreation and even transportation.\*

In the Chesapeake Bay region, settlements were based on natural resources, primarily waterways, because they facilitated trading, communication, and economic activity. In the late 1600s, tobacco dominated the local export market and its trade brought diverse goods and people to the Eastern Shore. The Choptank River connected places throughout the region making the shoreline a promising site for trading and settlement. Cambridge was established at such an advantageous location; a location long home to Native American Nanticoke Nause-Waiwash settlements.\*

Today, we have more information about the valuable services our ecosystems provide. They not only provide opportunities for economic gain, but also filter the water, store the rush of floodwaters, clean the air, and support an array of living organisms. In past efforts to optimize the advantages of location, we have altered our landscapes and waterways to serve material and economic needs, sometimes at the expense of our natural resource needs.\*

To this end, the Comprehensive Plan, proposed and has adopted a Downtown Waterfront Development District, that promotes infill development where the City has adequate infrastructure, and the Greenbelt that surrounds the perimeter of the Municipal City limits as defining the growth boundaries.

\*City of Cambridge Comprehensive Plan

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure -water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cambridge is in the process of completing several major infrastructure projects that will improve its competitiveness and further support compliance with TMDL regulations.

1. The City will complete a Waste Water Treatment upgrade for enhanced nitrogen removal (ENR) in May of 2013.
2. The City has completed the final phase towards eliminating a combined sewer outflow (CSO) in its downtown area.
3. With the assistance of CDBG and MDE grant assistance, the City has completed the hook-up and conversion of approximately 45 households from on-site septic tanks to public sewer service and has extended public water service to the residents of the Christ Rock area located in the southwest periphery of the City.
4. The City has also begun evaluating sewer lines and stormwater lines that are affected by high tide conditions on the west-northwest side of the City near the Choptank River. High tide and water events are causing sewer back-ups in private homes along the coastal area of Cambridge. More work needs to be done on determining the scope of the problem and toward developing solutions. Grant assistance is needed in this area.

The City of Cambridge is a participant in a newly drafted Dorchester County Watershed Improvement Plan, which seeks to meet EPA-TMDL pollution load requirements. Goals of this program as it may relate to the City of Cambridge include:

- Increase 4.5 acres of riparian shoreline buffers,
- Complete 4.5 acres of forest area restoration,
- Increase streamside grass buffers by 7%,
- Develop septic system GIS mapping capability in cooperation with the County,
- Expand an urban tree canopy program,
- Improve street sweeping programs in the City of Cambridge,
- Develop agreements to enable additional expansion of septic connection programs.

Over the past year, two redevelopment sites have been affected by the new stormwater management regulations and this practice will continue. Additional efforts are needed in the urban and downtown core area working with public and private land owners to retrofit existing impervious surface areas, (parking lots, sidewalks, alleys, streets).

Grant and technical assistance is needed to identify and assess potential stormwater run-off discharge areas. Funding would be needed to acquire easements, initiate design and construct appropriate facilities (bio-retention cells, cistern measures, rain gardens, green roofs, rain barrels) and other low impact design solutions.

There have been private efforts to increase the planting of street trees in the downtown area and along gateway streets but additional opportunities exist to expand on a tree planting program. The urban core area of the city is highly deficient in many aspects of tree coverage. The City would also benefit from creating an Urban Forestry Program to encourage the preservation, management and planting of new trees.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area's impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of "green" building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of "Buy Local" approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the nonprofit Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

In June 2010, the City of Cambridge adopted a new Stormwater Management Ordinance which incorporated the updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly. With this new ordinance in place, there will be a good opportunity to improve the quality of stormwater runoff by implementing new stormwater controls and retrofitting existing storm drain systems as development and redevelopment occur in the SC Area.

The City is currently in process of retrofitting it's largest municipal parking lot with bio-retention areas, new landscaping and lighting.

The City is also, working with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy on the Maryland Avenue Gateway project, which is being funded partially by the National Fish and Wildlife foundation, titled 'Cambridge Green Gateways: Innovative Urban Green Streets (see Attachment D). The intent is to address the much needed gateway treatment/design in such a way that elements can be replicated at all the City's gateways. Design will be completed in late May 2013, with the implementation to begin in the Fall of 2013.

For the second year, the Farmer's Market will be located on the waterfront with an ever growing number of vendors. This new, more centrally location, not only encourages buying local, but walking, as it is easily accessible from the surrounding residential neighborhood, and downtown. Many of the vendors sell directly to the restaurants in the downtown.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Key Implementation Groups or stakeholders include but are not limited to the following:

1. The City elected officials and staff (policy development and implementation).
2. City appointed Boards and Commissions including: Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Housing Board of Review and Historic Preservation Commission. (Implementation of green zoning changes, mixed use development, new form based code adoption and implementation).
3. The Cambridge Main Street non-profit program-Streetscape Development Team works to make downtown Cambridge a more beautiful, inviting, and environmentally sustainable place to spend time.
4. Local non-profits and neighborhood groups, such as the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, West End Citizen's Association, Pine Street Committee, Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth, Rotary Club, Chesapeake Bay Trust (green activities, funding support, tree planting, park improvements, rain barrel demonstrations and related programs, children's programs).
5. Local businesses such as the NOVO Corporation and the Hyatt Hotel Management Team); (tree planting and community clean-up program—Neat Streets).
6. Maryland State Highway Administration (MDSHA), Maryland Scenic Byways programs and Planning (MDP), Housing and Community Development (MHCD) Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCo); Natural Resources (MDNR) and Environmental Protection (MDE). Source of funding and oversight of program implementation.



#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building up on assets and building in amenities:**

**(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

- Walkable residential neighborhoods and a downtown adjacent to the waterfront;
- A mixed use waterfront with new development opportunities including preservation of the seafood industry, boatbuilding, and waterman's history.
- A new industrial park near the county airport;
- A growing tourism industry anchored by waterfront parks, the Harriet Tubman National Park plans; the nearby Blackwater Wildlife Refuge, participation in the Heart of the Chesapeake Country Target Investment Areas,
- A new \$35M Vocational Tech School;
- Two recognized historic district listing approximately 1,500 properties;
- Three institutions providing higher education
- Two nationally recognized scenic byways

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community's authentic "sense of place" and historic character?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

To expand Cambridge's "sense of place" and "historic character" several initiatives are proposed:

- (1) streetscape improvements need to be installed on key streets in our core business districts;
- (2) installation of historic street lights by expanding on existing efforts;
- (3) creation of pocket parks;
- (4) improvements to semi-public spaces;
- (5) emphasis on public landscaping, screening, decorative fencing, places to sit; shrubbery, public private art displays;
- (6) increased code enforcement for sidewalk repairs, property maintenance;
- (7) improved HPC design guidelines and sign ordinances;
- (8) creation of a "this place matters" photo contest;
- (9) development of an awards recognition program for historic preservation efforts;
- (10) working with private property owners to encourage new landscaping;
- (11) promotion of additional art and murals in the core area;
- (12) continue to have special events and festivals to bring more people into the downtown area and support local businesses;
- (13) working and supporting non-profit groups (Richardson Museum, Ruark's Boatworks) to build upon the city's waterfront heritage.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The R/UDAT plan placed a great deal of emphasis on connecting ‘places’ and emphasizing the importance of preserving public access along our waterfronts. This will be a priority as public and private projects move forward. The City has been awarded a \$38,000 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to analyze its tree canopy coverage and health with a goal of 40% canopy coverage in the core area. The City also seeks to develop a Forest Conservation Plan to better plan and manage our tree resources as part of this grant effort. Many of our existing parks and parking lots need expanded tree canopy to meet sustainability goals. Many of the city’s parks need additional improvements.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Key implementation groups and stakeholders include but are not limited to the following:

1. The City elected officials and staff (policy development and implementation).
2. Historic Preservation Commission. (Implementation-historic preservation efforts).
3. The Cambridge Main Street non-profit program-Streetscape Development Team works to make downtown Cambridge a more beautiful, inviting, and environmentally sustainable place to spend time.
4. Local non-profits and neighborhood groups, such as the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, West End Citizen’s Association, Pine Street Committee, Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth, Rotary Club, Chesapeake Bay Trust (green activities, funding support, tree planting, park improvements, rain barrel demonstrations and related programs, children’s programs).
5. Local businesses such as the NOVO Corporation and the Hyatt Hotel Management Team); (tree planting and community clean-up program—Neat Streets).
6. Maryland State Highway Administration (MDSHA), Maryland Scenic Byways programs and Planning (MDP), Housing and Community Development (MHCD) Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCo); Natural Resources (MDNR) and Environmental Protection (MDE). Source of funding and program implementation oversight.
7. Dorchester Center for the Arts, Ruark Boatworks, Richardson Museum, and other organizations working toward promotion of the art’s and waterfront heritage.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **C. Enhancing economic competitiveness:**

**(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

In early 2009, the City launched an effort to develop an Economic Strategy. The objective of the strategic planning process was to help the citizens of Cambridge position the city for growth. The resulting Economic Strategy will guide the City's activities over the next five years and generate positive economic outcomes.

This initiative was led by a Steering Committee of community volunteers and staff that produced nine distinct recommendations. An Action Plan for implementation is included with a suggested timeline that provides specific direction to the City's economic development community.

In June 2010 the Mayor and Council accepted the Strategic Plan in its entirety.

In today's economic development context, there is a growing confluence between quality of life and economic progress. The Cambridge Economic Development Department was established in 2007 to enhance economic opportunities for the city and its citizens. City staff is available to assist existing companies and entrepreneurs through the process of the expansion or start-up of their business in Cambridge. This office is a conduit to the many business resources available at the state and federal levels.

The Following is a tip sheet that is accessed from the City's web page, [www.chooscambridge.com](http://www.chooscambridge.com):

This tip sheet provides questions and contacts to help businesses and entrepreneurs manage the city process with greater ease.

'Cambridge Business Development Guide'

Cambridge Economic Development: 410-221-6074

#### Regional

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) maintains a qualified counselor and office in Cambridge at the City Administration Building at 410 Academy Street. SBDC Eastern Region offers advice for small businesses throughout the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

New Business - SBDC specializes in business plan development.

Existing Business - SBDC provides business assessment to create the best action plan for growth.

Training Classes - SBDC offers a comprehensive education and training program presented by business leaders from many professional disciplines.

SBA MD Small Business Resource - This guide offers many resources and programs to help both entrepreneurs and expanding companies.

Cambridge SBDC Office: 410-228-8191

#### Mid-Shore

The Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) and Business Development Fund is a collaborative effort operating under the umbrella of the Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC) to encourage and stimulate small and mid-size business growth in Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot counties.

Guided by venture capitalist consultants and top level business leaders from the community, the MSRC has established a revolving loan fund called the Mid-Shore Business Development Fund (MBDF) that provides equity financing for business start-up and expansion initiatives.

The Strategic Plan identifies the redevelopment of the state owned port property and the number one priority project for economic development. The City in partnership with the County and the Maryland Department of Transportation, release and Request for Qualification (RFQ) in 2011 to seek potential development teams for this important project. The foundation for the RFQ came from input from the community through the Water Front 2020 Charrette that the city hosted in 2008. The Jerome Parks Company, based in Annapolis was chosen through a competitive selection process. An extensive outreach and community engagement effort was recently completed for the initial design concepts, which will soon be released for public comment.

In support of this redevelopment project the City applied to the State and was awarded a Smart Site designation.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The following is a list of initiatives and incentive programs in place to encourage business development in Cambridge:

##### Enterprise Zone Tax Credits

The City of Cambridge has one of the two Enterprise Zones located within Dorchester County. Businesses locating in a Maryland Enterprise Zone may be eligible for income tax credits in return for job creation; and real property tax credits for investing in capital enhancements made in the zone.

##### One Maryland Tax Credit

Businesses that invest in an economic development project in a "qualified distressed county", such as Dorchester, may qualify for project tax credits of up to \$5 million and start-up tax credits of up to \$500,000 under the One Maryland Income Tax Credit Program.

##### HUB Zone

The Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUB Zone) Empowerment Contracting Program is designed to stimulate economic development and create jobs in urban and rural communities by providing federal contracting preferences to small businesses. These businesses can obtain HUB Zone certification in part by employing staff or workers from a geographical area designated as a HUB Zone such as Cambridge. For more information go to: [www.sba.gov/hubzone](http://www.sba.gov/hubzone)

##### Maryland Job Creation Tax Credit

Maryland's Job Creation Tax Credit program provides income tax credits to businesses that create new jobs to encourage them to expand or relocate in Maryland.

##### Job Creation Tax Credit Priority Funding Areas

A business that locates or expands in a "Priority Funding Area" must only create a minimum of 25 new positions to qualify for the Job Creation Tax Credit. A "priority funding area" is defined for the purposes of the Job Creation Tax Credit as:

State Enterprise Zones

Federal Empowerment Zones

DHCD Designated Neighborhoods

Incorporated Municipalities

Areas inside the I-495 and I-695 beltways

A single growth area designated by each county for the purpose of this credit.

Details regarding all of these programs can be found on the City's web page as well as with the Department of Economic Development.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4)**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

N/A

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Key implementation groups and stakeholders include but are not limited to the following:

1. The City elected officials and staff;
2. The Main Street community, the Cambridge Main Street non-profit program (which follows the "Main Street" model of economic development developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and includes four subcommittees:
  - Business Development Team works to bolster business activity downtown by strengthening existing businesses and attracting new businesses.
  - Market Development Team works to build downtown's customer base via marketing efforts, promotional campaigns, special events and other strategies.
  - Streetscape Development Team works to make downtown Cambridge a more beautiful, inviting, and environmentally sustainable place to spend time.
  - Organizational Development Team works to bring in the financial resources and volunteer expertise that Cambridge Main Street needs to help our community achieve its goal of a fully revitalized downtown district.
3. Local non-profits and neighborhood groups, such as, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Pine Street Committee and the West End Citizens Association;
4. Local businesses, and Chesapeake Community College, Sojourner Douglass College and the Dorchester County Public School System;
5. County officials and staff, such as the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.
6. The Economic Development Strategic Plan Committee, City and County economic development offices;
7. DHCD, MDP, SHA and other state offices.
8. Chamber of Commerce

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**D. Promoting access to quality affordable housing.**

**(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices - rental and homeownership -- for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

While not an exclusive list, the following recommendations are identified for improving housing conditions in the core area of the City:

1. Conduct a Housing Study to better identify housing conditions and to fully explore potential strategies based on neighborhood input.
2. Expand owner occupied housing rehab and weatherization programs in cooperation with Delmarva Community Services, and explore developing a rental rehab program.
3. Increase funds to demolish dilapidated structures and seek grant funds and mechanisms to encourage replacement housing for low to moderate income populations.
4. Provide pro bono legal assistance or reduced legal fees for untangling sometimes complex deeds and extended family ownership patterns in order to streamline the sale of property.
4. Purchase and acquire vacant lots, possibly through the creation of a land bank.
5. Expand and assist the capabilities of non-profits and community development organizations/corporations to undertake housing improvement and CD programs.
6. Create a housing rehab revolving loan fund to recycle limited dollars back to the community.
7. Reduce excise taxes in the downtown core area, not only in Cambridge but in other towns in Dorchester County.
8. Expand tax abatements for property investments, owner occupied ownership and rehab repairs in a wider area of the city.
9. Study the possibility of a progressive property tax on vacant properties to be rebated against future property taxes if a commercial or residential structure is built on the property within five years.
10. Explore the opportunities for community land trusts.
11. Continue to support organizations like Choptank Habitat for Humanity's efforts to encourage and provide home ownership.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Due to their proximity to the downtown, health care, shopping and other amenities, housing efforts to reduce blighted housing and construct affordable housing are critically needed in the core area. There is an estimated 100-120 severely blighted properties in the south and southwest area of the city. Much of city's housing problems are traced to the construction of small lot, narrow, poorly constructed factory housing, sometimes referred to as "shotgun houses". Absentee landlords and lack of re-investment also contribute to the problem. It is estimated that there are over 100 vacant lots already provided with necessary infrastructure. All housing efforts to improve housing stock in the core area will increase population with a reduced transportation burden.

Choptank Habitat for Humanity has been active in Cambridge since 2005 and has successfully worked with local families in providing much needed quality housing for home ownership.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Based on past building permit trends, it is reasonable to project a goal of at least 5 new single family dwellings and 5 rehabilitated homes a year in the core area, other than waterfront housing development. With an expansion of various housing programs, this number could be doubled. All of these housing efforts would go to low to moderate income populations and special needs populations (single heads of households, disabled and handicapped).

4. The key community groups and stakeholders include:

1. City elected officials.
2. City staff from the Planning and Zoning, Property Code and Economic Development Departments.
3. Staff and program assistance from Delmarva Community Services, currently identified as a housing provider.
4. State agencies, including DHCD and MDP.
5. Cambridge Housing Authority.
6. Neighborhood organizations including the Pine Street Committee and Staff from the Pine Street Empowerment Center.
7. Private property owners and landlords/renters and homeowners.
8. Salvation Army and churches/ministries that provide housing assistance.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Key implementation groups and stakeholders include but are not limited to the following:

1. The City's elected officials and staff;
2. The Main Street community;
3. Local non-profits and neighborhood groups, such as, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Pine Street Committee, the West End Citizens Association, and Choptank Habitat for Humanity;
4. Local businesses;
5. County officials and staff, such as the Department of Economic Development and Tourism;
6. The Economic Development Strategic Plan Steering Committee and;
7. Delmarva Community Services and housing program staff.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **E. Support transportation efficiency and access.**

**(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City needs additional grant assistance to complete gateway improvements on Maryland Ave., Cedar and Race streets. High Street, one of the city's most historic streets is in need of major rehabilitation. The installation of a traffic circle near the intersection of Muse, Market, Academy and the terminus of Maryland Avenue has been identified as a priority. The County's Airport needs additional funding to expand its runway. The City has many unimproved, radial streets that are in need repaving, curb, gutter, drainage improvements, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes.

The City, partnering with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, recently received funding through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Green Streets and Infrastructure program to design and implement gateway treatments at sites that have been identified through plans from the R/UDAT, the City of Cambridge Comprehensive Plan and the Economic Strategic Plan. This project is focusing first on the intersection of Route 50 and Maryland Avenue, with the expectation that there will be design elements that can be replicated at other identified gateways. As part of this project, the City has partnered with Sailwind, Inc., a local non-profit that oversees development of the Visitor Center and surrounding waterfront, in an application for funding to assist in land acquisition for this project. As part of this project, an intensive community engagement effort was completed in the fall of 2012 and the design development is in process now, with input from several University partners from around the Country. Detail designs will be completed in late May and implementation will begin in fall of 2013, as funding allows.

Through the community engagement piece of the NFWF project, the citizens expressed the need for the City's streets to be more accommodating to bicyclists and pedestrians. To this end, the City will be installing the first bike lane arrows along Maryland Avenue in April for a 120 day trial, to measure bicycle usage, in hopes of determining where other such applications could and should happen.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area's connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will Plan strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3)**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

N/A

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Key implementation groups and stakeholders include but are not limited to the following:

1. The City elected officials and staff;
2. The Main Street community;
3. Local non-profits and neighborhood groups, such as, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the West End Citizens Association;
4. Local businesses, and Chesapeake Community College and the Dorchester County Public School System;
5. County officials and staff, such as the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.
6. The Economic Development Strategic Plan Committee, City and County economic development offices;
7. DHCD, MDP, SHA and other state agencies.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **F. Coordinating and Leveraging Policies and Investment**

**(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Workgroup will meet regularly and as needed to remove barriers and to identify specific funding sources that support the needs of the City as outlined in this application. To name a few, efforts are expected to continue coordinating policies for the following activities in the Sustainable Cities Boundary:

1. Increased enforcement of building and property code violations.
2. Work with private and public sector housing and service providers to support, concentrate and streamline the processes for new construction and rehabilitation and demolition activities in the target area.
3. Implementing gateway and core area improvements to encourage aesthetic, bikeway, tree canopy and stormwater management initiatives.
4. Implementation of Sailwind/port property redevelopment initiatives
5. Continuing to promote Cambridge Neat Street clean-up programs.
6. Continuing to leverage Community Legacy fund with private sector funds to implement façade improvements in Sustainable Community Boundary.
7. Continue to promote tax credits, tax breaks, lien and fine waivers as a means to encourage re-investment.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Sustainable Community Plan is consistent with the principals, goals and objectives of the 2006 R/UDAT plan, the adopted Economic Development Strategic Plan and the adopted, award winning City of Cambridge Comprehensive Plan, all of which have been referenced in the development of this application.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Being designated as a State of Maryland Sustainable Community will enable the City to take advantage of a variety of State and Federal funding resources. Often these resources require local match funding and the City will continue to seek private sector investments, either private or non-profit, for these efforts.



## **V. PROGRESS MEASURES**

**For the Plan parts of section IV(A through F):**

**(1) List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City has numerous outcomes it will be working on with its partners:

1. Develop final plan for the Sailwinds property; implement preliminary elements of this plan including repairs to the wharf.
2. Implement elements of the Waterfront 2020 Plan and R/UDAT plans as it relates to the Sustainable Community Boundary; support of the Richardson Boatworks program as a tourism attraction.
3. Continue improvements to gateway streets and corridors including “green street” changes in connection with NFWF grant programs; support the acquisition-demolition-landscaping of blighted properties associated with this plan.
4. Develop a short and long range Master Recreation Parks Plan to identify funding priorities to improve waterfront and neighborhood parks.
5. Complete the Enhanced Nutrifcation Removal (ENR) project for the sewer treatment plant.
6. Identify and implement additional Low Impact Development storm water control measures; continue to plant trees to reach the goals of 40% tree canopy coverage, assist in the implementation of the County’s Watershed Improvement Plan as it affects the SC area.
7. Complete new Historic Preservation Guidelines and Rules of Procedures; assist property owners in efforts to take advantage of federal and state tax credits to restore historic properties.
8. Expand housing rehabilitation and weatherization programs for owner occupied and renter housing; continue to work with the private developers, non-profits, Habitat for Humanity, Delmarva Community Services to encourage new housing construction in concentrated neighborhoods to leverage additional private sector investment.
9. Continue streetscape and lighting improvements to the Downtown Development District, Maple Street, Main Street, Arts and Entertainment, Historic District and other geographically designated areas of the Sustainable Community area.
10. Expand on the pedestrian and bike trail linkages and markings to encourage alternative means of transportation especially in the core area and along US Rte. 50.
11. Continue façade improvement programs for downtown commercial business; continue business loan programs for start-up and expanding businesses.
12. Work with private owners on vacant big box storefronts for occupancy and new job creation.
13. Expand tourism industry including support for the Harriet Tubman National Park plans, public art, scenic byway markers and related support measures.
14. Continue to work with Chesapeake College to retain and expand their presence in the downtown area; develop and expand a micro-enterprise center for new start-ups.
15. Expand and support the Arts and Entertainment goals and objectives and assist with funding efforts to complete the Dorchester Center for the Arts building retrofit.
16. Evaluate current tax incentives and tax breaks for housing and business expansions in the core area for effectiveness and explore new avenues to encourage housing rehabilitation, owner occupied housing and attraction of out of town buyers as a retirement destination.
17. Encourage enhanced educational opportunities for city residents.

## **V. PROGRESS MEASURES**

**(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes.**

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Specific benchmarks include:

- Successful re-development of the Sailwinds property;
- Substantial increase in the number of visitors and tourist per year;
- Creation of new jobs, filling vacant industrial and commercial buildings, retain businesses in the downtown area;
- Increase in the city’s assessable tax base of the core community;
- Increase in the City’s median income and reduce unemployment rates;
- Improve the appearance of the downtown and special districts of the core area with lighting, landscaping, sidewalk improvements;
- Improve the city’s housing stock, encourage owner occupied housing; reduce urban decay, encourage the city’s efforts to market itself as a retirement destination;
- Discourage peripheral development, preserve greenbelts and forested areas at the perimeter of the city; resolve problems with unfinished subdivision developments and lack of completed infrastructure.

**REPLACE THIS PAGE WITH LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT  
RESOLUTIONS**

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION  
DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "Department") to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine your eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Act"). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. You have the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public certain information regarding projects recommended for funding in the Sustainable Community Plan. The information available to the public will include the information in this application, as may be supplemented or amended. This information may be confidential under the Act. If you consider this information confidential and do not want it made available to the public, please indicate that in writing and attach the same to this application.

You agree that not attaching an objection constitutes your consent to the information being made available to the public and a waiver of any rights you may have regarding this information under the Act.

**I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant's Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_

Any one who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this financial assistance application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such application, is subject to immediate cancellation of financial assistance and other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Sustainable Communities Plan or Project(s) proposed in this Application can be accomplished and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

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Authorized Signature

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Print Name and Title

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Date

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